



The First-Year Guide

Installment 1

Dartmouth Student Assembly presents *The First-Year Guide*, a student-produced, student-managed unofficial guide to your first year at Dartmouth (in production since [Fall of 2003](#)). In which, you will learn about everything: from Dartmouth's many traditions to the funky lingo, from the best food options near campus to how you can get involved in campus activities. We hope our experiences and insights can help you get the most out of your Dartmouth experience.

This publication will be the first of several installments going over Life at Dartmouth, Academics, and various resources offered to students on campus.

What to Bring

Optional suggestions for things to bring

Getting your stuff to your dorm room can be done in a combination of ways:

- 1) Packed in your suitcase
- 2) Ordered to your [Hinman](#) (sign up for the Amazon Prime student discount!)
 - a) Address format: #### Hinman Box, Hanover, New Hampshire, 03755
- 3) Purchased once you arrive
 - a) at CVS in Hanover (overpriced but walking distance)
 - b) at Walmart (in West Lebanon a 12 min drive away or 40 mins via Advance Transit (AT), which is the [Upper Valley's free public transportation](#))
 - i) Note: Keep an eye out for bus trips during New Student Orientation (NSO)

Bedding

- 1-2 Sets of Twin XL ("extra-long") sheets - (Twin XL – 36" x 80" x 6" – is the standard dorm bed at Dartmouth. You can also consider different bed sizes from various Dartmouth student companies)
- 1-2 Pillows
- Comforter and/or blanket
- Mattress topper (Optional)
- You won't need bed risers - Dartmouth beds are manually adjustable

Clothing

Just bring your current wardrobe! Dartmouth students wear sweats and t-shirts all the time (especially in the winter). However, it's nice to have a few dressy outfits for formal events like Matriculation with President Hanlon. Hanover rains occasionally (a lot in the spring), so pack an umbrella, rain jacket, or rain boots.

As for the winter, you'll need a winter coat (make sure it is equipped for temperatures below freezing), snow boots, warm socks, and lots of layers. Keep in mind that as winter approaches there will be opportunities for students that need assistance accessing winter clothing. There are plenty of resources on campus to support you!

Dartmouth students love **flair**, which is tacky clothing with ridiculous designs. So, feel free to bring the middle school outfits you've shoved to the back of your closet, last year's Halloween costume, and fun hats - the wackier, the better! But remember there's a difference between flair and outfits that cross the line of cultural appropriation.

You can also bring a bathing suit for swimming at the pool and in the river. There are also many hiking trails around campus so bring a pair of shoes you don't mind getting dirty. You do not need to stress about purchasing outdoor equipment, as the Dartmouth Outing Club (DOC) has lots of equipment available for students during all seasons, such as sleeping bags, hiking bags, etc.

Bathroom

- [Shower Caddy](#) - portable bag to carry shower items
- Bathrobe
- Shower Shoes (such as plastic flip flops)
- Towel and washcloth
- All your normal toiletries (can be purchased at Collis Market/CVS/Walmart/Amazon to your Hinman)
- Medicine

Furnishings

You're pretty much set with the bed, desk, closet, drawers, trash can, bookcase, and chair provided by [ORL \(Office of Residential Life\)](#), but depending on personal preference you might want some of these things too. Be sure to check out what type of housing you have - maybe even coordinate with your roommate(s) - to pick out what you can fit.

All of the following are popular optional room decor, but are not necessary:

- *Desk Lamp/Bedside lamp*
- *Stackable Drawers*
- *Futon or Comfy Chair*

- *Mini fridge (max size 3 cubic feet; if you have a roommate, stick with one to share)*
- *Television (FYI: the Jones Media Center has lots of consoles you can check out for free!)*
- *Coat Tree or “over the door” hooks*
- *Fan (depending on the building you live in, it can get pretty hot, especially in the first days of fall and the last few days of spring term)*
- *Tupperware containers*

If you're unsure about what to bring or what to have, contact your Undergraduate Advisor (UGA).

Miscellaneous Items

- Basic school supplies (can also be bought/obtained from the College once you arrive)
- Laundry Detergent
- Laundry Basket/hamper (Dartmouth uses the Scramble app for laundry. You can also use a Credit/Debit card at the machines. Download it here for [iOS](#) or [Android](#)!
- Brita and Brita Filter (the tap water is safe to drink directly, though)
- Coffee maker or tea kettle (with three-pronged plugs)
- Iron or mini steamer
- Hair dryer/curling iron/straightener
- Tide to Go pens
- Bicycle lock (if you bring a bike)

New Student Orientation (NSO)

This period of your Dartmouth experience will be characterized by large amounts of great meals, fun activities, opportunities to socialize and try new things. Your only responsibility during this time period is to meet wonderful people, learn about important resources, unpack your room, and soak in the orientation experience! Orientation is also an opportunity to explore the *depth and breadth* of studies at Dartmouth. You will be able to meet with your faculty advisor and Undergraduate Dean and your Faculty Advisor. Your rigorous academic experience will commence within only a few short days after the official start of classes, so enjoy your full-fledged stress-free freedom as much as you possibly can. Keep an eye out for our Academic Guide in Installment 2!

During orientation, get to [know the campus](#) well before everyone else shows up. Check out the Explore the Arts program, at the Hood Museum at the Hopkins Center for the Arts. [Attend the Shared Academic Experience](#) and academic open houses and info sessions.

Spend time bonding with your floor – you'll want to be comfortable with the people you're living with! Don't panic if it seems that everybody has already formed groups of friends. Orientation is a time to meet new people, and there's a good chance that those orientation cliques aren't

actually 'best friends' after a few days of knowing one another. Reach out to one another – it's all about community building!

If you would like to and if you haven't already had the chance to take online placement exams, you'll have the chance to do that as well!

Friends

Building a Community of Friends

We know moving away from home for the first time is intimidating, but you will soon find yourself forming friendships with people on your floors, residence halls, house communities, orientation events, classes, clubs, sports teams, etc. If you go on a First-Year trip, you may also make friends that way! Since Dartmouth is such a small campus, you'll soon see familiar faces everywhere. If you can't wait to start meeting your classmates, then don't. Join the [Class of 2025 Facebook](#) and the Class of 2025 GroupMe.

Living

First-Year Housing

You'll be assigned to one of the [six house communities](#): Allen, West, South, East Wheelock, School, and North Park, and a respective dorm hall. These houses have their respective residence locations and common spaces. For your first year, you will live in a dorm that is all First Year. Everyone living on your floor will be in the same house community as you. The house community offers many resources for you to consult for support!

Roommates

At Dartmouth, you don't really have a say in who you room with, aside from information you submitted with your Residential Life Housing Profile. Most Dartmouth students end up appreciating this system, and many people find that they become quite close with their roommates. If you do have problems, communicate/compromise with your roommates or contact your [Undergraduate Advisor](#) (a UGA is another student that helps facilitate your residential experience).

Living Learning Communities:

[Living and Learning Communities \(LLCs\)](#) are, like the name suggests, various residence locations that help various communities live with those of similar interests/identities. LLCs are mostly located in the McLaughlin Cluster, but some LLCs are located in their own houses around campus. Ex: Global Language: Japanese Language for Japanese speakers/learners, Triangle House for LGBTQ+ students.

To live in an LLC, you must fill out an LLC application. You will be able to indicate which LLCs you are interested in, rank them in order of preference, and will have to answer questions regarding why you are interested in that particular LLC.

Residence Halls & Amenities

You can learn more about your residence halls' amenities [here!](#)

The house community you are in determines which upper-level student housing you get. You can check out the upper-level student housing for your house community [here!](#)

Food

Currently, all First-Years are automatically put on the Ivy Unlimited Meal Plan. This offers students unlimited swipes and 250 dining dollars that can be used across the [variety of dining options](#) available at Dartmouth. Keep in mind that the information here is subject to change by Dartmouth Dining Services (DDS). The main dining halls at Dartmouth are:

- **FOCO (officially called '53 Commons):** Dartmouth's most "traditional" dining hall where students can swipe in for "all-you-can-eat dining." Options include a specific main course meal that changes every day, a kosher section, a vegan section, pasta, burgers, salads, a dessert bar, and much more. It is always a great and easy option.
- **Collis Center for Student Life:** Home of Student Life on Campus. The Collis Cafe features many options to-go. All the merchandise is available through "Dining Dollars" which are separate from your "Meal Swipes" - the standard way to pay for a full meal. Remember that you have a limited number of Dining Dollars per term!
- **The Hopkins Center (AKA "The Hop"):** An excellent location for meals ranging from breakfast burritos (Bobs, see Dartmouth Lingo for more), burgers and grill items, customizable salads, and multiple other snacks, cold foods (sandwiches/wraps/etc.), and desserts. A popular option for more comfort food items like burgers and fries.
- **Novack Cafe:** Located conveniently within Baker-Berry Library, the cafe features many student favorites from the campus Starbucks, along with an assortment of snacks and pastries to keep you charged while working.
- **Ramekin Cafe:** A new cafe located in Anonymous Hall, a recently constructed building between the McLaughlin Cluster and the Life Sciences Center (LSC). Ramekin provides various sandwiches and also Starbucks items.

There are also several restaurants in town that you could check out! Here are some of our favorites:

- **Lou's**
- **Umpleby's**
- **Jewel of India**
- **Han Fusion**
- **Tuk Tuk**
- **Molly's**

Grocery Stores

- The Co-op – General Grocery needs

- Yiping's Asian Market (West Lebanon)– Asian food store
- CVS – Smaller food items, open 24 hours. Besides Topside, the place to buy sodas, toiletries, and dorm snacks
- Collis Market – Not really off-campus, located on the bottom floor of Collis, a smaller, quick stop convenience store

A Final Note

This seems like a lot of information now, but don't worry! We look forward to learning and growing with you as we experience Dartmouth together. This will be the first of three installments that will go over various aspects of Dartmouth as an institution, so don't be nervous if you still have questions or feel like you're missing information. Feel free to send questions to New Student Orientation at New.Student.Orientation@dartmouth.edu or send us a question at Student.Assembly@dartmouth.edu! See you soon in the next installment on Academics!